

Islamic Review & Muslim India.

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-and-

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The Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.

Chas. H. Morrell

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ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

MUSLIM INDIA

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THE HOLY QUR-ĀN

The Arabic Text in beautiful writing, with English translation, and commentary, of the Holy Qur-ān by Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A., LL.B., will be out very shortly, and the names of purchasers are now booked by the Manager, The Mosque, Woking (Surrey). The Holy Book will run to about 1,300 pages, will be printed on first-class India paper, and will be well bound. The whole text is printed and is with the book-binder.

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NOTE

Owing to our inability to conform to the conditions on which the engravers are prepared to execute our work, in consequence of the control of copper by the Government, we are compelled for the present to postpone the production of the frontispiece in the *Review*.

THE PROPHET

By AN ENGLISH MUSLIM.

IT was some three thousand years ago that God, speaking to Moses, made the promise found in Deuteronomy xviii. 15, "And the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me ; unto him shall ye hearken." From that time onwards the children of Israel looked for the coming of this Prophet who should be like unto Moses, i.e. a lawgiver. This was not the only expectation of the sons of Jacob, because when, some two thousand years ago, we find a certain holy carpenter laying claim to divine inspiration and proclaiming himself a messenger of God, the Jews asked whether he was either Elijah, the Messiah, or that Prophet. From this we infer that they expected three different persons to appear. Concerning the second coming of Elijah Jesus explained to the Jews that it was a spiritual return, not an actual return of the person of Elijah himself. In Matthew xi. 14 we read that referring to John the Baptist, Jesus said, "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was to come." Jesus himself only claimed to be the Messiah, and never announced to the Jews that he was the Prophet referred to in the prophecy of Moses. His followers only accepted him as the Messiah, as the son of the house of David destined to rule over regenerated Israel. Even they looked forward to the subsequent appearance of the Prophet with perhaps more hope than the Jews who did not accept Jesus. Because, believing in the Messiahship of Jesus and also believing in the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning Elijah, they naturally would have redoubled faith in the completion of the last of these prophecies.

However, the Church commentaries on the New Testament invariably confuse the two distinct personalities of the Messiah and the Prophet. Present-day Church belief disregards the fact that the followers of Jesus believed in the coming of three distinct personages, and, whilst agreeing that John the Baptist was the person promised to appear in the spiritual power of Elijah and to act as a herald for the Messiah's coming, yet the prophecy of the Prophet is simply accounted for by saying that Jesus was both Messiah and the Prophet. In investigating this question we find, however, that the three promised ones had

each a distinct duty to perform. The work of John the Baptist has been referred to, that of Jesus was simply to bring back the Jews from irreligiousness and to restore to them their spiritual and mundane status. His whole teaching is simply an exhortation to the Jews to come back to the Law. He himself observed that Law, and in no place in his sayings can we find anything to suggest that he claimed to be "like unto Moses," who was "the lawgiver." But the promise of God had to be fulfilled, and 600 years after in Mecca there appeared the Prophet. Muhammad laid claim to be that person spoken of by Moses and expected by both Jews and Christians. He was a law-giver, therefore he was like unto Moses. He was "from among thy brethren" because he was an Ishmaelite, a descendant of the founder of the Jewish race, Abraham. Still it has taken the world centuries to waken to the fact that this mighty promise of God has been fulfilled, and even to-day the religion of the promised law, the Qur-án, is still unappreciated and reviled by many. Throughout the Middle Ages all that was known concerning Islam was the work of biased, fiercely anti-Muslim writers. Consequently the representation of our religion through the coloured spectacles of prejudice and antagonism resulted in a huge misconception of the claims and teachings of Muhammad. But things have changed much since and man's mind has been broadened through education and sane thinking. Now, except with certain narrow-minded individuals who happily enough constitute an infinitesimal minority, it is refreshing to find in English literature an absence of those epithets and slanders which formerly were used whenever it was found necessary to mention the name of the Prophet of Islam. Young as I am I can even remember that only eight or nine years ago teachers in our schools when talking about Egypt or India always referred to Muslims as the "followers of the false prophet." Now I find *that if one in any newspaper or journal uses the term "The Prophet" Muhammad is referred to. To no other personality is this designation applied.* Cowper writes, "God moves in a mysterious way." Is it not strange that now in this country, in mentioning Muhammad, non-Muslim writers do not use his name but what he claimed to be—the Prophet. But it has to be proved if Muhammad really deserves this name. A prophet is one who through Divine inspiration and revelation provides a people suffering

from certain evils with a panacea. A prophet is one who receives Divine injunctions for the regulation of our spiritual and mundane lives. If we study the life story of any prophet we find that in his time certain evils existed—we find that owing to contingencies of the time there was a certain falling away from the law. Then the prophet appears, and those who follow him and carry out his injunctions become free from these evils. In short, a prophet is the light provided by God to lead mankind out of the darkness and morass of evil. Reckoned in this light it is to be proved whether Muhammad really deserves the name of Prophet. I claim that he has rightly proved his claim to this title, not only because he gave the world of his day a way out of its evils, but he has provided us in the Qur-án and through his life with the solution of all the problems of the present day as well. The Qur-án binds our lives with God, and the following of the injunctions laid down in the Book is the only method by which we can meet those great problems which are pressing upon the West at the present day. Islam is not a religion merely of belief shorn of action or a religion for Sundays or special days. Islam is religion alive—religion for every moment of our lives, and instead of passive non-resistance of evils the teachings of the Qur-án enjoin us to fight evil and utterly destroy it. Those evils which disappeared during the lifetime of the Prophet are instances of the success of this policy, because Islam has never again been troubled with them. Let us take the question of war which is troubling the mind of so many Christians to-day.

Jesus absolutely forbids retaliation or reprisal. It is useless saying that we must act in the spirit of his teachings and disregard certain verses. The language of the Sermon on the Mount is quite clear and devoid of any ambiguity. Yet bishops, clergy, and laymen are all preaching the continuation of this war until victory is assured. The way out is shown by the Prophet, who recognized that it is useless preaching non-resistance of war whilst we have war on the earth. Muhammad safeguards us against aggressiveness by forbidding a war of aggression and telling us to defend our homes, women, children, churches, and mosques against the aggressor. Who could conscientiously object to defend one's home or one's womenfolk or place of worship? Thus our clergy are now preaching Islam to guide in this world's greatest trial. Then with war comes a companion

evil, that of drink. It has been proved that drunken soldiers mean atrocities. What does Jesus do with the drink problem? Can we appeal to soldiers to keep sober in the name of Christianity when the Gospels relate that the first miracle of Jesus Christ was to convert water into wine? Muhammad preached wine as an abomination. It has fallen to my lot to take part in this war as an infantryman in the trenches of France. Without wishing to cast aspersions on my old comrades, I must say that the chief recreations of our troops are drinking and gambling. In small villages ruined by shell-fire one always finds a house still inhabited by an old Frenchwoman who calmly takes the risk of death in order to make a small fortune (for a peasant) selling drink to our troops. Most people are unaware of the fact that in our bases in France a certain gambling game known as "House" is officially permitted, and is played in the Expeditionary Force canteens themselves. One cannot fail to realize the appropriateness of the position of the following verse of the Qur-án: "They will ask thee concerning wine and games of chance. Say, In both is great sin, and advantage also, to men, but their sin is greater than their advantage." This verse occurs in the midst of a portion of the chapter known as "The Cow," which deals with questions of war. The advantage spoken of is the timely amusement which a soldier finds in this abominable relaxation. This shows that the Revealer of the Qur-án knew that these twin evils abound among soldiers of all time, especially during active service. In another part of the Qur-án is written: "O believers, surely wine and games of chance are an abomination and of Satan's work. Avoid them that ye may prosper." What our rulers are trying to end by restrictions, State purchase, or any other scheme was finished once for all among Muslims within a week of this verse being revealed. Does not Muhammad deserve the title of The Prophet?

Since the first murder war has been a human asset which no religion or secular organization has yet been able to eradicate from the earth. But the unbiased student of the Scriptures will have to admit that for a real, healthy, and practical code of war morals one has to turn to the Qur-án. It seems an irony of fate that the chief belligerents in this the greatest of all wars should have for an official religion, not one containing a code of morals for war, but one which absolutely

ignores war by asking the believer to be a passive non-resister. Far worse than this is to find so many atrocities performed by officially Christian nations. Muslims in their wars have kept clear of these evils because they had a real law to follow. The treatment of civilians in occupied territory and the treatment of prisoners of war have all been dealt with in the Qur-án and other war ordinances of the Prophet. Can any other religion, can any other prophet except Muhammad claim to have provided mankind with any balm for that terrible human malady, war? Of social evils I will not say much save that they are sapping away the vitality in that part of the world which is now, and will in the future, need every spark of vital power it can obtain. This war has opened the eyes of many to this terrible social curse, and so far the only practical solution has been the acknowledgment of what the Qur-án preached 1,300 years ago. That is, to prevent social evils it is absolutely necessary to see some kind of separation between men and women. It may sound harsh to a Western mind in theory, but if one carefully thinks out all other remedies suggested it will be seen that this is the only practical one. Muhammad shows in the Qur-án how it is possible to separate the sexes without infringing upon the rights and liberties of either. I should like to see something on this subject from the pen of our esteemed Editor. If we could have a real, thorough discussion on the subject of how the Qur-án deals with our social evils I am positive that it would contribute much to those who are pondering over the matter at the present moment. The world to-day is, in my humble opinion, on the brink of a great religious revival. Different religions are discarding old-fashioned dogmas which stand in the way of human progress. In the platform of those who are alive to the fact of this new awakening, "the chief plank" is universal brotherhood. Old narrow-minded prejudices are dying out and instead we have the great Islamic concept of mankind as one huge fraternity. Various movements based on this ideal have met with very promising results. To name a few, on the religious side, the Free Religious Movement, the Brotherhood Movement, the Theosophical Brotherhood, Spiritualism, and on the secular side the various Socialist movements and the Esperanto movement. All these movements, by working on sympathetic lines, are slowly doing away with prejudice and intolerance. But progress is slow, and the

great question of how to attain to this great ideal of universal confraternity is one which demands a deliberate solution. If only we could all sit at the feet of Muhammad and see how his glorious teachings cemented together for all time the white, the red, the black and yellow races, because it is only the essence of his teachings which even if applied under the name of Christianity accomplishes this, then we will find that solution which we seek. Where Islam works is found such a brotherhood of diverse races as the world has never before seen. It is because other religions began and finished in the realm of theory and Islam supplied a practical guide for mankind's need that we witness such a grand success to-day of the teachings of the Prophet. Whatever evil, social, political, or religious, which needs solution, read the Qur-án, and therein will you find Divine guidance. Let but the West study Muhammad with naked eyes and unbiased and unprejudiced mind, then, by observation of results accomplished and application of Quránic injunctions to present-day questions, it will come home to the heart of many that the glorious promise of God given through Moses was fulfilled in Arabia in the person of Muhammad the Prophet.

SALMAN.

MUSLIM INTEREST IN PALESTINE

MUSLIM ; THE BEST GUARDIAN OF WORLD'S HOLY PLACES

THE following extract we make from the speech of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, with which he followed Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall, who delivered a lecture on "The Muslim Interests in Palestine," at Caxton Hall on 9th June, under the auspices of the Central Islamic Society.

Three great nations have their religious interests in Palestine—Jews, Christians and Muslims. Is it not our first duty, then, to find out which of these three are best suited to guard the interests of the others? History and respective beliefs of the parties concerned can only decide this question. Jews do not believe in Jesus, and can by religion have no veneration for places sacred to Christianity. A Christian can have no faith in Islam, and cannot be expected to pay the same respect to Muslim holy places as a Muslim would do. The case of a Muslim is quite different. Every holy name of importance

in Jerusalem is holy to him. Every prophet that was raised in Jerusalem and in its vicinity is his own prophet. There are various verses in the Qur-án which support my statement, but I will read here only a part of section 10 of chap. vi. :—

(84) "And this was our argument, which we gave to Abraham against his people. . . . (85) And we gave to him Isaac, and Jacob, each did we guide, and Noah did we guide before, and of his descendants David, and Solomon, and Job, and Joseph, and Moses, and Aaron ; . . . (86) and Zacharias, and John, and Jesus, and Elias ; every one was of the good ; (87) and Ishmael, and Elishah, and Jonas, and Lot ; . . . (88) and from among their fathers, and their descendants, and their brethren, and we chose them and guided them into the right path. . . . (91) These are they whom God guided, therefore follow their guidance."

Eighteen prophets are named here, and do they not include every sacred name which has some connection with Palestine. A Muslim is told in the last verse to follow the guidance of all the prophets and respect them as his own, and he has to make no distinction between a prophet and a prophet under the injunction of the Qur-án (chap. ii. 120).

Think over the names I have mentioned in the quoted verses. Can you suggest me any other name whose holy memories have some connection with Palestine, and whose name the Quranic list does not include ? A Muslim has to respect them all, and to regard them as his own prophets. Can a Jew entertain the same ideas of veneration for those places which belong to Christians and Muslims, and can a Christian share with the Muslim the spirit of respect which the latter cherishes for places hallowed by his traditions and religion ? Read the whole of your sacred Scriptures, and find me out a single verse or a sentence in the whole writing which inculcates such broad-minded respect for the prophets and spiritual teachers of other religions. I would quote another verse from the Qur-án which enjoins upon a Muslim to accept, not only the prophets of the House of Jacob as his own teachers, but he has also to accept and believe in the message of every great spiritual leader in any corner of the world who stood in the name of God to give divine messages to his people, without having regard to the particular denomination or creed he belonged to. True Muslims, according to ii. 4 of the Qur-án, are those "who

believe in that which has been revealed to you (Muhammad) and that which was revealed before you." This verse lays down the broad bases of faith in all the prophets of the world, and the recognition of truth in all religions is a distinctive characteristic of a Muslim's faith. Every prophet of the world is his prophet, who can command from him the same homage which he has to pay to his own prophet. I would therefore appeal to your common sense, ladies and gentlemen, as to which of the three nations concerned is best qualified to have the guardianship of their religious interests in Palestine. In fact, Christian and Jewish religious interests are those of a Muslim, but can those interests which are peculiar to a Muslim be styled as Christian and Jewish interests. Muslim, therefore, is the best guardian of Christian and Jewish holy places. I would go further, and say that the interests of the holy places of every religion in the world are only safe in a Muslim hand. Has he not been enjoined in the Qur-án, even, to shed his blood in order to protect the holy places of other religions, in these words: "Those who have been driven forth from their homes, wrongfully, only because they say 'Our Lord is the God.' And if God had not repelled some men by others, cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, wherein the name of God is ever commemorated, would surely have been destroyed," etc. (xxii. 41). A church, a cloister, a synagogue, an oratory, and a mosque have equal rights on a Muslim for their protection—and mark the liberality of the Qur-án, to make mention of mosques last of all! Can any one show in any religious book a similar injunction on its votaries to guard the places of worship of other religions? And these are not mere theories; they have been actualized by us, and history bears testimony to what I say here. Is not Islam the proverbial enemy of idolatry, and notorious killer of all sorts of polytheistic tendencies?—yet millions of temples, pagodas, and shrines consecrated to numberless gods, goddesses, and demi-gods, teeming with valuable golden and marble images and idols have survived the most successful rule of Islam. They still possess the artistic beauty and sublimity of the ancient workmanship, and excite the wonder of moderns. Does not this fact speak highly of that largeness of soul which the text I have quoted infused in the notorious breakers of idols? But where are the remains of our art and culture, and our places of worship in lands which were taken from us by

Christians? Who is responsible for the absolute destruction and total disappearance of those colossal landmarks of science, culture, and art which existed in Cordova, Toledo, and Grenada? I myself have been to Jerusalem, and what I saw there led me to think that Muslim broad-mindedness in its actual shape, which found its exhibition in every corner of Jerusalem, could not be too much exaggerated. Every place of note in the Old Testament has been preserved and protected with the same care which a Muslim holy place would demand from us. I leave it to you, gentlemen, to find out for yourselves which of these nations has got best claims to the custody and care of these places. We want a Muslim mind; we are not concerned with nationalities. Why don't you manage to create a Muslim heart on your side and claim easily to be the guardian of our interests? May I tell you what a Muslim has to believe? The Qur-án tells me to say to you: "Say, we [the Muslims] believe in God, and that which has been sent down to us, and that which has been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses, and Jesus, and that which was given to all the prophets from their Lord; no difference do we make in any of them, and to God we are resigned" (chap. ii. 120).

This is the Muslim faith, a faith which every gentleman, in the right sense of the word, should believe.

JESUS' CONCEPTION OF GOD

By ABDUL AZEEZ PEACH (*An English Muslim*).

WAS Jesus God? Did he ever affirm he was or lay claim to divinity? To both questions I answer emphatically in the negative. I do not believe for one moment that he ever claimed to be in any way superior to the average mortal, or wished to be regarded as such. Jesus Christ constantly referred to God as "the Father," but at the same time he had no desire to claim for himself in the slightest degree any amount of divinity. The term "Father" was merely used as the most suitable allusion to the Supreme Being, the Creator of all things. When Christ first taught his disciples how to pray, they were instructed to approach the object of their worship by such term, "Our Father."

This involves the question of Christ's conception of God.

It is of course impossible to imagine the Supreme Being connected with any kind of material personality. To the average intelligent person this is evident. From a Moslem standpoint the Creator is conceived as an impersonal, yet all-embracing power, a force tremendous and gigantic, far beyond the grasp of our puny intelligence, beneath whose control the entire universe is swayed. Only a fool denies the existence of a God; this mysterious creative force is evident and visible everywhere, its effects act upon our daily lives and its spirit pulsates in the hearts of the nations.

Yet this terrific creative force cannot be regarded as a kind of impassive and mechanical strength. It is imbued with something which we dimly see and as dimly try to understand—which in a slight measure is imparted to us and which we name "Intelligence." This word is but a poor medium for the transmission of meaning, and is used in lieu of a better one. This force in itself being the Creator of intelligence or "knowledge," it is therefore infinite in its omniscience. It is quite impossible for us insignificant creatures to hope to gain even in the slightest degree anything like a true conception of God. The nearest we can attain is a knowledge of His attributes, which is only possible through constant prayer. All that can be understood is that He is a vast and enormous power—a power infinite in righteousness and strength, with an embodiment of sentiment and intelligence to a far greater degree than we with our faint understanding can ever hope to imagine.

But there is one word in the human vocabulary which may kindle some small spark of understanding, and that word is "Love." This vast power is in one sense a huge concentration of unfathomable Love. God is Love. This terrific force which whirls the entire universe through the ether of space and which provides and tends to every necessity, from the guiding of the planets in their orbits without the least derangement down to the subsistence of the smallest crawling insect, is Love, and Love is but another name for God.

This, no doubt, was Christ's conception of God, and it is the Moslem's conception also. The old pagan idea of a terrible raging monster wading waist-deep through blood and destruction with the sword of death in hand has faded into the dim past, and the Creator stands in the minds of the children of

earth as a profound and infinite Love. As a well-known hymn aptly puts it :

Mine is an unchanging Love,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

Christ's conception of God was a great and undying love. His whole life was one blaze of glorious purity which steadfastly aimed at the one goal he had set himself to attain—Love. He was wrapped up in it. He spent his whole life trying to impart this great Love to others, and in some measure succeeded. This explains the otherwise unintelligible sentence, "The Father in me." Love, and love alone, was his one conception of God, and his allusion to the "Father" was but metaphor for the pure and sacred love with which his whole being was saturated.

I have spoken to many people on this subject, and have found that among the more broad-minded and deeper thinking individuals the idea of the divinity of Christ is fast dying out. Many, however, especially those of a more sentimental temperament, seem rather unwilling to forsake the romantic and poetical theory (if it may be so termed) of a compassionate god descending from his heavenly home to the turmoil and strife of an earthly existence to redeem a world rotten and corrupt with sin ; but, nevertheless, in answer to a point-blank question, "Do you imagine or consider, as a sensible and practical man of the world, that it is even credible that the Infinite and Supreme Being would reduce Himself to the level of a mortal by begetting a son?" the answer usually commences with "Well—er—no—that is—er—not physically, of course, but . . ."

There is always a "but" which shows a degree of uncertainty. The Christian religion, as a religion, is founded upon an uncertain base. I say as a religion, not meaning as taught by Christ himself, the fundamental principles of which lie buried deep and unfathomable beneath the bulk of the New Testament. When this inevitable "but" is removed, and the conception of God is as clear to the Christians as it is, and for that matter always has been, to the Moslems, better progress will be made towards an understanding of this gloriously omniscient and infinite Being Whose power sways the universe, and Whom we Moslems name Allah.

BYE-WAYS AND HIGHWAYS

By JOHN PARKINSON.

What visions fill the brain of man,
Majestic o'er the senses roll ;
The present, past, and future scan,
And glorify the budding soul ;
The vast, illimitable vault of night,
Ethereal, blue, and golden-starred,
Has opened vistas to his sight,
And citadels of thought unbarred.
He sees innumerable suns
In silence through the ether sweep,
As star on star its cycle runs
Within the interstellar deep.
Though peaceful every movement seems,
Yet swirling vortices are there,
Within the glowing nebulous streams,
Where temporal stars at midnight glare.
The rocks and rivers, plains and suns
Repeat the same eternal theme,
The same unchanging process runs
In starry drift and gaseous stream.
All things are aspects of a whole,
Links in Causation's sovran chain ;
One Law directs the human soul,
The meteors in the solar train.

THE varying moods of the human soul disclose a mechanism of the most intricate and sensitive kind, responding as it does to every vibration, every movement of the environment—movements great and small, strong and weak, pleasant and painful, boisterous and subtle ; tuned to a hundred thousand keys and to multitudinous notes ; throbbing and vibrating to the pulsation of every molecule replete with energy and to the everlasting heart-beat of the universe.

Causation knows no chaos, but a chain
Of chains of interwoven links in links,
A flowing sea, in one continuous stream
Where atoms jostle atoms as they flow,
Communicating motion to the whole,
And working out the destiny of things ;
Weaving the Present from the woven Past,
Preparing for the Future chain on chain ;
Retaining every precious jewel found
And casting all the worthless stones aside.

Mankind, the earth, the stars are one, bound by immutable laws in one vast, illimitable all. Seas wind-swept and plains sand-strewn, cities crowded with life and desolate regions, like those empty lunar sea-beds, barren stretches, ragged hills, and

great ring-craters I was viewing through the telescope a few short moments ago. Broken by the flight of ages, dust and ashes of worlds star-deep in space, globes and streams and wisps of gas, gigantic and gorgeous, winnowing and waving in the fields of the firmament, as flotsam and jetsam on the bosom of an ocean—yet all united, linked together by a power that embraces and supervises all, binding atom to atom and force to force.

Here we have Evolution in its grandest, most sublime, and most terrible aspects—birth, growth, and decay, the transformation of substance, the destruction of old forms and the creation of new; cosmic dust being shaped and reshaped in the wonderful laboratory of Nature, unique and matchless, passing from cosmic dust into worlds and from worlds into cosmic dust again, after the lapse of ages.

Time is weaving the web of causation out of the tissue of substance on the loom of the eternal, fashioning and refashioning the design of the garment, step succeeding step as cycle follows cycle, every movement interconnected. The winds roar and the oceans moan, keeping time to the beating of the spheres.

From man to microbe, moon to star,
Phenomena correlated are;
One whole without a single gap,
Series and series interlap;
There is no centre, no, nor verge
Where series into series merge.

On earth, as in the heavens, the same unending process runs—cause and effect continually, the cause disappearing in the effect and the effect itself a cause or causes in the process of producing future effects: new forms continually replacing dissolving forms, the dissolution and creation working simultaneously. We see the forces elevating mountains and then denuding them, cutting out valleys with rain and snow and ice, mountain torrent, and meadow streamlet. Here Nature paints the meadows with the gold of the buttercup and the pink-tipped florets of the daisy. There she weaves hedges of briars and thorns, and adorns them with convolvulus and roses. Above all, we see her moulding humanity with a firm, relentless power; moulding, ever moulding, building up and tearing down, creating and grinding into powder; atoms and electrons and ions, vibrating and undulating with energy, driving the mechanism of the world, omnipotent and omnipresent, indestructible, infinite, eternal, without beginning or end of days.

MAN.

Man goes onward, ever onward, shouting his triumphal ode, struggling and striving as he goes for the fulfilment of the ideals he has formed—the ideas he has drawn from experience. As he goes his environment presses upon him at every step, changes his moods, and remoulds his ideas to suit the new experience, controlling his actions and compelling him to act often on the first rapid judgment, or what is commonly called the impulse of the moment, but always swaying his destiny towards a distant, unseen, unknown goal. Man is affected by every current in the universe, both physically and mentally. Every opinion expressed in his hearing is a new experience. Another book read, a fresh sight seen, stimulates his mental activity and opens another path of thought. All men learn, every moment of life, some more, some less. Great minds are ever absorbing fresh details of organic and inorganic activity and building up more knowledge; cutting deeper and broader channels into the mysterious recesses of the universe; adding idea to idea and deducing a new and better explanation of phenomena; revealing as they go the general and synthetical truth of the world-order, the vanguard of humanity's to-morrow.

MAN IS A BUNDLE OF SAMSKARAS,

every action, every molecule of his body imbued with the elements of feeling. He is a mass of feelings, which respond to every pressure of his surroundings and themselves vary according to the kinds or degree of pressure. He is a thing of moods, which spring into activity, rise, develop, and sink again to rest—sometimes regular and uniform in action, often intermittent and contradictory; always an expression of the character of the individual, a resultant of the whole organization, of ontogenetic and phylogenetic development, of heredity and environment. Sunshine and shadow, cloud and rain, play upon his feelings and affect his moods, bringing joy or sorrow, peace or storm, giving pleasure or pain. To see the effect produced on the mind and thought by the changes of the environment one has only to dip into the literature of the race, especially the poetry, and that principally of men of genius, for they are the most sensitive. There every mode of feeling is revealed—not merely change of idea as a total synthesis brought about by more correct reasoning and wider experience, but change of

outlook, emotional spasms, change due to sentiment, pressure on certain feelings. Man is a pent-up storehouse of different degrees and kinds of energy, and that force or emotion rises to the surface which is for the time being acted on by external movements, those movements themselves giving certain outward conditions. A cloud, a rain, a slight change for the worse in fortune, a threatened loss of income or of work—the spirits droop and the eyes grow sad, and the thoughts respond to the dominating emotions of the system. A blaze of sunshine, a word of sympathy and kindness, the pressure of a friendly hand and the eyes flash with joy and the lips ripple into laughter.

Ethically, what does man strive for?

HAPPINESS.

Some put it another way, and say pleasure. But here the one is a parallel of the other, because those things which make a man happy give him the greatest pleasure, or to use another word, contentment. Do not let us be confused on the issue. When I say that the chief end of the strivings of man is happiness or pleasure or contentment, I do not mean that the sum total of all actions and all thinking is either the drink-shop, the gambling-hell, or women. I mean that when a person takes up any special work as a philosophical or religious or scientific duty, whether mental or physical, it is because he thinks it is right, and because, being right and therefore his duty, it brings him happiness and contentment and gives him pleasure. I am not referring to a person's daily toil for sustenance, but to his highest aims and actions, those ideas and ideals that control his moral conduct and on which we judge him as a social being. One man finds his greatest happiness in labouring for the welfare of humanity. Another finds happiness in working solely for himself. There is a good deal of truth in the saying that the God of this world is not Allah or Yahoveh, but Mammon. One man's aim, the greatest good for the greatest number: the other man's aim, self. Yet the end is the same in both cases, the happiness of the individual so acting. But the results—wide as the poles asunder. Just think! What an influence the movements of the environment must have on the individual. Part of the universe, he is made cognizant of the fact every step of his existence. His bodily form and mental possibilities he has drawn from a long line of

progenitors, stretching back into the dim and distant past, beyond the period when his forefathers were fire or sun worshippers, beyond the rise of civilisation and the dawn of history to primeval savagery and lower organization. After birth his parents and teachers train him in the elementary principles of reasoning on things and in general knowledge. He forms habits and absorbs opinions, and too often forms beliefs from the examples and teachings of those with whom he comes into contact in early life. And if his mental powers have been developed as they ought to be, he goes on drawing knowledge from his surroundings and adding fresh experiences every day of his life.

Born from the womb of nature, from birth to death he is moulded by visible and invisible forces, playing on every atom and molecule of his organization. Acting on the qualities he has inherited makes him what he is : such-and-such an individual playing such-and-such a part in the history of the race.

These things we are, or ought to be, cognizant of—the mutation of reality, the reality of mutation, the omnipotence of substance, the omniscience of causation, the oneness of the universe, holding dominion over all.

Is it to be wondered at that man's imaginings lead him into gardens of delight, to Elysian fields and Lotos lands—to realms where there is neither cold nor pain, hunger, melancholy, nor sorrow, anger nor storm, cloud nor rain ?

WOMAN UNDER ISLAM

By SHAIKH M. H. KIDWAI

*Continued from page 256, ISLAMIC REVIEW, Vol. V.
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Mahr became one of the essentials of the Muslim marriage, so much so that if it were not specifically mentioned at the time of marriage, or in the marriage-contract, the Law will presume it by virtue of the contract itself.

Under Islamic Law, the wife does not have to wait for the time of divorce to get the exclusive possession of the *Mahr*, as she has to do under the Jewish Law.

Mahr, under the Islamic system, becomes a very beneficial check on divorce or dissolution of marriage. There being no

maximum fixed for dower, an exorbitant amount is sometimes fixed, and that becomes a great deterrent to divorce.

The wife has an absolute option to claim the *Mahr* during the lifetime of her husband. It rests with her to choose her own time for making that claim. She may even refuse to take up her abode with her husband without previous payment of the 'prompt' *Mahr*. It is optional on the part of the woman to agree to any part of the *Mahr* being 'deferred,' i.e. payable on the dissolution of marriage.

The right of a wife once vested in *Mahr* is not lost even if she murder her husband. Her right cannot be taken away from her. But she can make a gift of her dower to her husband. However, a stipulation on her part before marriage to abandon all her right to dower is inoperative, and should such a stipulation have been entered into, the wife would nevertheless be entitled to the customary dower.

Mahr is a debt like all other liabilities of the husband, and has preference over legacies bequeathed by testator and the rights of heirs. Even a partition of the estate cannot take place until the *Mahr* has been paid.

When the wife is alive she can recover the *Mahr* herself from the estate of her deceased husband. If she be dead, the assigns or representatives stand in her place and are entitled to recover the same.

A suit for ejectment against a widow in possession of her husband's estate for unsatisfied *Mahr* will not be allowed.

Mahr is only one of the concessions to women. There is no law which has been so favourable to women as the Islamic Law.

The social laws of Islam were deliberately kept elastic. Islam was meant for all ages and all times, and therefore all its laws could be made adaptable to every circumstance. This law of *Mahr* can be very conveniently adapted to the needs of the present-day European social ways. In Europe there is a system of marriage settlement. 'Prompt' *Mahr* of Islam can easily take the form of a marriage settlement, and to continue a financial check or divorce another large portion of the *Mahr* should be left as 'deferred.' This will be a great improvement in the marriage customs of the European society. 'Prompt' *Mahr* can be either in cash invested for the benefit of the wife or in the form of property settled on wife. It will become her

absolute and alienable property immediately, and she will be saved from suffering any physical discomfort if her husband does not treat her well.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN.

In another respect Islam gave woman greater rights than to man, and this was in the custody of children, called in Islam *Al-hazanat*. On this subject we wrote as follows in the July 1915 number of the ISLAMIC REVIEW :—

Muhammad's place in the foremost personages of the world is highest even as a legislator. Being inspired by the God of Nature, his laws are wonderfully judicious—strengthening the weak points of the human nature, weakening the wilder passions of humanity. The grand legislator had, it is obvious, the mind of humanity open before him when he laid down his laws. The illiterate prophet proved the most learned legislator and reformer. The book of Nature was open before him. He was a naturalist—a naturalist who was conversant with every phase of the nature of that creature who has the most complex nature of all the creation—Muhammad knew the very soul of man. His laws of inheritance, of marriage, etc., etc., all show a deep insight into human nature, and it is because of that insight that his laws held as good thirteen centuries ago in the burning deserts of Arabia as they do to-day in the coldest clime—these laws were as good for nomadic Arabs as they are for highly civilized Europeans. It was the study of human nature that caused him to legislate even on such matters as the rights of women to property which were legislated even in civilized England only a few years ago, and also on such matters as the custody of children which still remain unlegislated in these islands.

Muhammad made a vivid and natural distinction between *jabr* (*patria potestas*) and *hazanat* (custody of children). The right of *jabr* was given to man (father), that of *hazanat* to woman (mother).

“Whether during marriage or after its dissolution the mother is of all persons best entitled to the custody of her children,” says the *Fatawai alamgiri*.

The right of *jabr* accrues to the father when the child does no more need maternal care, and then the father has a right to

take charge of him, to educate him, and to imbue him with family spirit.

"At the age of nine," says D'Ohsem, "a boy passes from the care of his female relations into the hands of his father, in order to receive from the father a masculine education analogous to the paternal status, condition, and fortune."

The mother has the custody of her daughter until she arrives at her marriageable age—in certain cases until she is actually married. No male is allowed to have the custody of a female child unless he is within the prohibited degree of relationship to her, and cannot under any circumstance marry her. The right of *hazanat* has in view the exclusive benefit of the infant and belongs to mother *qua* mother. Such is the toleration of the Muslim Law that the right of *hazanat* appertains equally to Muslim and non-Muslim mothers. Of course, apostasy and misconduct in the mother, being considered prejudicial to the interests of the children, form a bar to their remaining in her custody.

The qualifications necessary for the exercise of the right of *hazanat* are: (1) That the *hazina* should be of sound mind; (2) that she should be of an age which would qualify her to bestow on the child the care which it may need; (3) that she should be well conducted; and (4) that she should live in a place where the infant may not undergo any risk morally or physically.

The right of *hazanat* is lost (1) by the subsequent marriage of the *hazina*; (2) by her misconduct; (3) by her changing her domicile so as to prevent the father or tutor from exercising the necessary supervision over the child.

Because the law presumes that a woman marrying a stranger and entering a new family will not have the same affection for the child as before, it deprives such woman of her rights of *hazanat*, but if she marry a relation of the infant she retains her right.

Even when a mother, separated from her first husband, marries a second time with a view to secure for her child a better living, she does not forfeit her right of *hazanat*. In the absence of the mother the right of *hazanat* descends on her female relations and those connected through her are preferred to those connected with the child on the father's side only. In the matter of *hazanat*, women as women have been given a

superior right to man. As long as there is a female relation to look after infant children no male relation can get the right of custody. Islamic law has given rights to man and woman in accordance with nature. As in the case of *hazanat*, it has recognized the superiority of women over men for certain objects. On other occasions, the natural superiority of man over woman has been kept under view. The balance of rights has been justly held up, and there is no room left for any rupture between the two sexes.

THE QUALITIES OF A WIFE.

As to the qualities of a wife Al-Ghazzali centuries ago said in his *Kimiai Saadat*:—

The most important of all qualities which should be sought in a wife is chastity. A wife who is beautiful but of evil character is a great calamity; such a one had better be divorced. The Prophet said, "He who seeks a wife for the sake of her beauty or wealth will lose both."

The second desirable quality in a wife is a good disposition. An ill-tempered or ungrateful or loquacious or imperious wife makes life unbearable, and is a great hindrance to leading a devout life.

The third quality to be sought is beauty, as this calls forth love and affection. Therefore one should see a woman before marrying her. The Prophet said, "The women of such a tribe have all a defect in their eyes; he who wishes to marry one should see her first." The wise have said that he who makes a wife without seeing her is sure to repent it afterwards. It is true that one should not marry solely for the sake of beauty, but this does not mean that beauty should be reckoned of no account at all.

The fourth desirable point is that the sum paid by the husband as the wife's marriage-portion should be moderate. The Prophet said, "She is the best kind of wife whose marriage-portion is small and whose beauty is great."

The fifth is that she should not be barren; and also that the wife should be of a good stock, and should not be too nearly related to the husband.

We doubt very much if the above given standard of a wife can be raised now or ever afterwards. It would be needless to add that Al-Ghazzali has given none but the Islamic standard.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE GRAND MUSLIM FESTIVAL OF EID-UL-FITR AT THE MOSQUE, WOKING

THE Grand Muslim Festival of Eid-ul-Fitr this year was celebrated with great éclat at the Mosque, Woking, on Saturday, 21st July. The occasion, to all lovers of our Holy Faith, both English and others, is one of great significance. Besides affording an invaluable opportunity to all followers of Islam of a fixed annual reunion, it is an occasion for demonstrating to the non-Muslim people in these isles the rapid increase in the number of those who have elected to seek the means of their spiritual well-being under the benign ægis of El-Islam. It shows, besides, what a change popular opinion generally in this country undergoes, and has undergone, in the face of the actual presence of Islam. The gathering of this year's Eid-ul-Fitr was remarkable in many more ways. The celebration of past years consisted, so far as the elements of new acquisitions to the ranks of Islam were concerned, mainly of those who were charmed with the convincing simplicity at first sight of the "Religion of Nature," but after three years of sustained activity, and a wider dissemination of its truths, our new brothers and sisters who participated on the occasion this year were those whose homage to Islam has been the result of deep study and ample deliberation. The celebration of Muslim Festivals similar to the present indicates a landmark from year to year of the steady and encouraging progress that the spirit of Islam is making in this leading country of the West. The presence of a great number of followers of other persuasions testified to the fascinating simplicity of its plain and rational teachings.

From an early hour the lawn in front of the Memorial House began to foreshadow the success which marked the event of the day, a few of our friends having arrived the day before. The congregation, which consisted of ladies and gentlemen, represented nearly all parts of the world. There were, to begin with, our English Muslim brothers and sisters, who had mustered in full strength to demonstrate the fact that their love of Islam was wholehearted and strong; there were gentlemen from Persia, Arabia, different parts of Africa, and a large

number of ladies and gentlemen belonging to India. The significant presence of the former showed the effect of the stirring days in which we live on the minds of the fair sex in India. It showed that East was no more East in the sense in which it was understood by the regimental ballad-maker of the British Isles. It had, on the other hand, thrown off its insularity, and was now marching abreast of the times.

Punctually at 11.15 the "Takbir" call for prayers was given. This over, the congregation fell in orderly ranks in the leadership of Khwaja Kamaluddin, and two more devout and prayerful "Rakaats" were never offered at the altar of a Muslim's duty towards his One, Great Allah. Prayer over, the Imam delivered an ample and exhaustive sermon, taking for his text the famous verse of Al-Qur-án : "Say, surely, my prayer and my sacrifice, and my life and my breath are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds, the Creator of all nations, the Sustainer of all races, and the Cherisher of His creatures. No associate has He, and this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit."

He drew out points of difference which stood between the "superman" of the West, as symbolized in the hero of that greatest of German prophets of "kultur," Nietzsche, and the superman of Al-Qur-án, whose greatness lay in his duty to only one God, through his service towards his fellow-men. We hope to publish it in full in our next issue. The audience felt a new experience in this comparative treatment of the two symbolic figures representing the highest degree of human achievement attainable under the gospel of materialistic advancement of modern times in the West and the elevating and inspiring teachings of Al-Qur-án.

After prayers, the interesting ceremony of wishing "Eid Mubárik" was gone through by the worshippers embracing each other in fraternal affection and goodwill. After a short interval the Eid lunch in true Oriental style was served, the national dish of Islam, the Pulao, occupying the place of honour in the menu. The rice, of the finest quality, for this was sent over from India by our brother, Molvi Sadruddin.

The afternoon was devoted to a sort of happy picnic. After the "Asar" prayers the congregation was enlivened by the recitation of verses from Al-Qur-án by our brother Saada Bey, of Egypt, in the sonorous and genuine Arab style of those whose mother-tongue is the language of Al-Qur-án. A few

departed after this interesting ceremony, but a larger number stayed to dinner and the "Maghrab" prayer. After this the congregation began to make their last leave-takings, having enjoyed a most inspiring and beautiful Eid day.

Our earnest prayers go up to the Provider of worldly and spiritual sustenance to favour us with many more happy returns of the auspicious day, which is like a milestone in the continuous progress of Islam in these isles. We earnestly hope that those who have chosen El-Islam as their future guide in life will find in it the source of that abiding happiness which it affords.

In the end, we desire to extend to our brothers and sisters our most sincere expressions of admiration and thankfulness for the noble manner in which, as in previous years, they toiled night and day to make the Eid a success.

ABDUL QAYUM MALIK.

BIRD'S-EYE SKETCH OF PROPHET'S PERSONALITY

(Summarized from Mr. Gorham's Sketch in his "Ethics of the Great Religions.")

MUHAMMAD was a man of imposing presence, of medium height, broad-shouldered, and strongly built, with fine features, coal-black hair and eyes, and a long beard. His mental powers were of a high order, his manners reserved yet affable and courteous; his speech laconic and often humorous, a man of strong passions but noble impulses, capable of great love, great generosity, altogether a character of surprising force, capacity, shrewdness, and determination. Temperate and prudent in youth, he gained in manhood the name of "al-Amin," or "the faithful," from his fair and upright dealing. Just and affectionate in private life, he lived in the humblest style in a poor hut, eating the plainest food, lighting his own fire, and mending his own clothes and shoes, having given his slaves their freedom. For months together he would seldom eat a hearty meal, always sharing it with those whose need was greater; a number of the poor lived entirely on his generosity. The following beautiful story is worth passing on: "Sleeping one day under a palm-tree, he awoke suddenly to find an enemy named Du'thur standing over him with drawn sword. 'O, Muhammad, who is there now to save thee?' cried the man. 'God,' answered Muhammad. Du'thur dropped his sword. Muhammad seized it, and cried in turn: 'O, Du'thur, who is there now to save thee?' 'No one,' replied Du'thur. 'Then learn from me to be merciful,' said Muhammad, and handed him back the weapon. Du'thur became one of his firmest friends."

ISLAM AND PROGRESS

By MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.

I

THE opinion prevalent in Christian countries with regard to El Islam is that, as compared with Christianity, it is a religion essentially unprogressive, and to some extent degrading to the human intellect. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The sort of lethargy, comporting ignorance and superstition, which has weighed upon the Muslim masses for the last three centuries is the result of historical circumstances very similar to those which darkened Western Europe in the period before the Renaissance. It has little more than a geographical connection with the Muhammadan religion; and now, with the revival of a scientific education, it is at an end. It would be a serious mistake to suppose, in view of the relatively backward state of the Islamic world, that El Islam itself is unprogressive in the modern meaning of the word. How can it be, when one reflects that modern progress is the outcome, not of any Christian doctrine, but free thought, and that Islam, unlike Christianity, prescribes free thinking as a duty for believers.

"Seek knowledge, even though it be in China," said the Prophet to his followers; thereby appointing knowledge as an object in itself desirable, worthy of the greatest toil for its attainment, even though it be the knowledge of a heathen race. And again:

"An hour's contemplation and study of God's creation is better than a year of adoration."

"He dieth not who takes to learning."

"Whosoever reveres the learned reveres me."

"To obtain education is incumbent upon every Muslim, male and female."

"The first thing created was Reason."

"God has not created anything better than reason. The benefits which Allah gives are on its account, and understanding is by it; and Allah's displeasure is caused by it, and by it are rewards and punishments."

"Verily a man has performed prayers, fasts, charity, pilgrimages, and all other good deeds; but he will not be rewarded save in proportion to the sense which he employs."

"To listen to the words of the learned and to instil into others the lessons of Science is better than religious exercises."

"The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr."

"He who leaves home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah."

"Acquire knowledge, it enables the possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lights the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is an ornament among friends and an armour against enemies."¹

Such was the personal teaching of the Apostle of God, which for Muslims comes next in authority to the inspired Qur-án. And in the Qur-án itself, again and again, appeal is made to the faithful as well as to the infidels to study history with an open mind, to examine the phenomena of nature, and to investigate the doctrines of their religion. "O Lord, increase my knowledge," is a prayer taught by God to the prophet in the Qur-án. Free thought and free inquiry is allowed to the Muhammadans concerning everything which man's intelligence is capable of apprehending. "Know then," writes an ancient Muslim author when concluding his account of the cosmogony, "that, having thus created the world, God next called Mind or Intellect into being. And God said to the Mind: "Imbibe knowledge," and it imbibed knowledge.

¹ "Sayings of Muhammad."

Then Allah said to it : " Receive the ability to manage matters," and it was so. Then said God, " Of all things which I have created by My glory and majesty, I love none but thee. By thee will I deprive, and by thee bestow ; by thee will I confirm, and by thee punish." Therefore also Allah has declared by the mouth of His Apostle (God bless him) : " The wise man is he who is truthful and patient in his temper, and it is mind that delivers mankind from evil." For this cause Allah allows Mind an entrance into Paradise to discover all mysteries, and He will not punish the wise in the Day of Resurrection in the same manner in which He will punish the wilfully ignorant."¹

Indeed, in El Islam the mind of each individual man is entrusted with that authority and jurisdiction which in orthodox Christianity is reserved for a close priesthood ; man's mind is God's vicegerent upon earth, with full liberty of judgment over everything which it is capable of understanding. Only God, the great encircling mystery, is outside its faculty of comprehension or imagination, and must remain the object of devout belief and holy fear. The Muslim, while he demonstrates the fact of God's existence by the necessity of a cause for all things visible, and ascribes to Him the qualities which must belong to a benign Creator, is forbidden to attempt to define the Deity in human terms, insisting only on a Unity which guards the mystery. The anthropomorphism of the polytheist is for him a blasphemy, while the Christian's doctrine of the Trinity appears to him deplorable because the attempt at definition of the indefinable detracts from the splendour of the Unity, which is all that man can apprehend of so intense a mystery.

Again, to say that Jesus Christ is the begotten son of God is to ascribe to the eternal mystery the functions of a human being, therefore blasphemous, a transgression of the proper limits of man's thought. " Behold, you"—i.e. the Christians—"are people who dispute concerning that of which you have some knowledge. Why, then, do you dispute concerning that whereof you have no knowledge."²

Nothing which happens in the natural world, no fresh discovery of science, can shake the faith of the true Muslim. He beholds in every new phenomenon fresh evidence of the Majesty, Benevolence, or Power of God. His mind is free in

¹ Mejrû'd-dîn : " Unsu'l-Jelîl," vol. I, chap. i.

² Qur-ân : Sûrah iii., " Al-i-Imrân."

all affairs of earth, provided he complies with certain rules of conduct imposed, with a view to his bodily, mental, and spiritual health ; and it is his duty to explore the science of his day and to accept what his mind approves of it ; aye, even though it dissipate beliefs or fancies long accepted among Muslims. It cannot touch his creed : "There is no god save God, and Muhammad is the Apostle of God"—a creed which Gibbon in treating of the life of Muhammad cynically pronounced to be composed of "an eternal truth and a necessary fiction." One must confess that the fiction—if it ever was one—has been justified in the historic sequel.

It is, of course, a fact that the majority of Muslims are ignorant and superstitious, accepting a vast mass of legends and absurd beliefs. I have quoted purposely from a work abounding in such Oriental folk-lore—the "Unsu'l-Jelîl" of Mejru'd-dîn—in order to show that even in an ancient work of that description, which teaches that the world rests upon the shoulders of an angel, the angel upon a great rock of emerald, the rock upon the horns or shoulders of a bull, the bull upon the back of a great whale or dragon, which swims in a great sea, which is upborne by air, which is surrounded by darkness—even in such a work, a panegyric of the human mind finds natural place among Muhammadans. And where man's mind is thus exalted, vain beliefs are always menaced with the sword of scepticism. Indeed, a large proportion of this mass of legend and superstition merely represents the science of a bygone day. The spirit of Islam expects it to be superseded by the science of to-day. The rest consists of folklore and proverbial stories, and may be described in the words which Professor H. M. Léon uses of the Jewish "Haggadah" :

"It transforms the sacred writings into a thousand and one themes, with almost countless variations. What the Biblical narrative omitted the Haggadah supplied. It explained the motives, it elaborated the story, it discovered connections and associations between the remotest countries, races, and periods, and this often with a startling realism ; but, above all, it ever drew sublime morals from the most commonplace circumstances." ¹

I will add that this folklore has much literary beauty and historical interest, and that I do not think that Orientals (who

¹ Prof. H. M. Léon : "The Targum" in the *Philomath*, April 1916.

have the sense of fiction highly developed—a region where truth has quite another value than it has in fact) ever attached quite the same religious value to these old legends and allegories which Western Christians have ascribed to them in their belief. Muslims, in particular, have with them always the exhortation of their Scriptures to accept nothing blindly, but to use their intellects in judgment. In this Islam is essentially more, not less, progressive—that is, capable of responding to the needs of a new era—than any other of the great religions of the world. To-day, this fact is realized by educated Muslims who, be it said in parenthesis, are generally much better informed concerning the theory and practice of Christianity than are educated Christians with regard to the teaching of Islam.

There is a great and growing movement in the Muslim brotherhood tending to discriminate once and for all between the living body of its teaching and the mass of folklore thrown about it like a garment of an antique fashion; not in a contemptuous or hostile spirit—for the folklore is beloved, and will for ever be commemorated in Muhammadan religious language. But there is the saying of the Prophet: "Speak to people according to the level of their intellectual capacities," and many Muslims of to-day have outgrown the mental atmosphere of their remote forefathers. How little the discrimination of the robe affects the faith will astonish only those critics who, misled by the practice of Christianity, have thoroughly identified the latter with the former.

I have quoted the Qur-án itself, a number of the sayings of the Prophet, and one ancient author to show that El Islam is in its essence a religion of enlightenment. A modern Muslim writer, whose orthodoxy is above suspicion, has the following passage (I translate it roughly): "It [Islam] rises above content in the tradition of the fathers.¹ He who accepts a belief merely because it has attracted his imagination, without demonstration or argument, has no assurance concerning it, and is no believer. . . . He who takes doctrines upon supposition trains his mind for the reception of mere fancies. . . . The intellects of these followers of vain imaginings stand still in contemplation of that they are accustomed to regard. They do not advance along

¹ Cf. Qur-án: Sûratu'l-Maidah: "And if it is said unto them, 'Come to what God has sent down and to the apostle,' they say, we prefer that in which we found our fathers. What! even though their fathers knew nothing and were undirected."

the path of thought, nor do they tread the road of observation. And if they so continue, gradually foolishness will overtake them, and imbecility will increase upon them, until their mind becomes unable to perform its proper function and can no longer distinguish good from evil."

Here follows a quotation from Guizot's "History of European Civilization," to the effect that modern progress had its origin in the spirit of free thought engendered by the Reformation—a movement in the direction of Islam. Indeed, some thinkers on both sides have reckoned Protestants a sort of Muslims. The author proceeds: "El Islam stands almost alone among religions in discountenancing the reliance on tradition without argument. . . . It demands that its votaries should undertake the investigation of the groundwork of their faith. In all its utterances it speaks to the intelligence; in all its judgments it judges for the intelligence. It announces in plain terms that eternal happiness is the reward of intelligence and introspection, while deadly error and misfortune follow on neglect to use the mind."¹

The pious Muslim is, in fact, enjoined to be as free a thinker as the average agnostic of our Christian lands. Agnostics abound with us: among the Muslims they are rare and not indigenous—I mean that here and there an individual ignorant of his own faith, and much attracted by the thought of Europe, professes doubts which he would not have felt had he studied his own religion with the same attention he bestowed on the disease of Christendom. Most of our agnosticism springs from the revolt of the awakened intellect against theological definitions of the indefinable, and from the opposition of the Churches to free thought. There are no such reasons for revolt in the case of the intelligent Muslim, who here and there may see occasion to desire reforms, the sweeping out of superstitions and abuses.

I have made these general remarks by way of preface to the following reflections upon four points—the chief ones, as it seems to me, in which the Muslim standard either differs, or is supposed to differ, radically from the Christian standard—the status of woman, fatalism, the brotherhood of all the faithful, the command to kill.

¹ (Es Sa'ādātul-'abadiyeh fī 'sh-Sharī'atī'l-Islamiyeh.) "Eternal happiness is the law of El Islam."—Sheikh Ahmed el Hashemi, Cairo, A.H. 1320.

II

THE POSITION OF WOMAN.

It has been said that the Islamic view of woman is a man's view, while the Christian view of woman is a woman's view. One might add that, since Christendom is ruled by men, the Christian view has never been translated into terms of fact, but has merely caused confusion of ideas in theory, and many inconsistencies in practice. We who are accustomed to the contemplation of a sentimental ideal are apt to underestimate the human value of the Muslim standpoint, and to talk as if the Muslim religion had lowered the social and moral position of Eastern women and caused their personal degradation, omitting altogether to take into account the fact that a minority of the women of Christendom is degraded to a depth which every good Muhammadan surveys with horror, while a larger number are debarred from all fulfilment of their natural functions. This the Muslim regards as a great wrong and cruelty.

The historical truth is this, that the Prophet of Islam was perhaps the greatest feminist the world has ever known, considering the country and the age in which he lived. From the lowest degradation he raised woman to a position beyond which she could only go in theory. The Arabs of his day held women in extreme contempt, ill-treated and defrauded them habitually, and even hated them, for we read in the *Qur-ân*—

“O believers, it is not allowed you to be heirs of women against their will, nor to hinder them from marrying in order that you may take from them part of that which you have given them (i.e. you are not to rob them of all property, as is the practice of the heathen Arabs) unless they have been guilty of evident lewdness. But deal kindly with them, for if you hate them, it may be you will hate a thing in which God has placed much good.”¹

There is, besides, the saying of the Prophet: “A Muslim must not hate his wife. If he is displeased with one bad quality in her, then let him be pleased with another which is good.”

The pagan Arabs regarded the birth of girl-children as the very opposite of a blessing, and they had the custom to bury alive such of them as they esteemed superfluous. The *Qur-ân* peremptorily forbids this practice with others hardly less unjust

¹ *Qur-ân* : *Sûrah* iv., “*En-Nisâ*.”

or cruel. It gives to women a definite and honoured status, and commands mankind to treat them with respect and kindness. The Prophet said: "Women are the twin halves of men."

"When a woman observes the five times of prayer, and fasts the month of Ramadán, and is chaste, and is not disobedient to her husband, then tell her to enter Paradise by whichever door she likes."

"Paradise lies at the feet of the mother."

"The rights of women are sacred. See that women are maintained in the rights granted to them."

"Whoever does good to girls (children) will be saved from hell."

"Whoever looks after two girls till they come of age will be in the next world along with me, like my two fingers close to each other."

"A thing which is lawful but disliked by God is divorce."

"Shall I not point out to you the best of virtues? It is to treat tenderly your daughter when she is returned to you, having been divorced by her husband."

"Whoever has a daughter and does not bury her alive, or scold her, or show partiality to his other children, God shall bring him into Paradise."¹

The whole personal teaching of the Prophet is opposed to cruelty, especially towards woman. The Qur-án no doubt speaks of chastisement to be given to them under certain circumstances: "And (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping-places, and beat them; then if they obey you do not seek a way against them" (*En-nisá*). The verse deals with a low class of society, where women desert their husbands; it provides three remedies, and beating is the last resort, by no means advocated by the Prophet, for he said: "They who beat their wives do not well." When some women complained of the ill-treatment by their husbands, he said: "You will not find those men the best among you." Indeed, the Prophet made a husband's treatment of his wife the test of his general conduct by his saying: "The best of you is he who is best to his wife."

Innumerable are the instances of clemency in his recorded life. He forgave the woman who prepared a poisoned meal

¹ "Sayings of Muhammad."

for him, of which one of his companions died, and from which he himself derived a painful, oft-recurring illness which eventually caused his death. The Qur-án also, on a hundred pages, declares forgiveness and mercy to be better than punishment, *when practicable*—that is to say, when such forgiveness would not constitute a crime against humanity in the region of politics, or when, in the case of private individuals, the man is capable of real forgiveness, banishing all malice; otherwise the trouble would recur in aggravated form. Muhammad was not only a prophet, but also a practical ruler of men, and the men with whom he primarily had to deal were hot-blooded Arabians.

As for the institution of polygamy, against which such horror is expressed in Europe, Muhammad found a system of unbounded licence for the lusts of men, and made of it a decorous social order. The passage in the Qur-án which allows polygamy *under certain circumstances* does not enjoin it, nor permit it unconditionally. It occurs in the third verse of chapter iv, which deals with orphans and the care to be taken of them. I quote the previous verse along with it, to show the context.

“2. And give to the orphans their property, and do not substitute worthless (things) for their good ones, and do not devour their property (as an addition) to your own property. This is surely a great crime.

“3. And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you—two and three and four—but if you fear that you will not do justice between them, marry one only or what your right hand possesses (i.e. a slave or captive). This is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course.”

It is known that this chapter was revealed to guide the Muslims in the conditions which arose after the battle of Ohod, when seventy men were killed. Other battles followed, and the Muslim ranks were decimated, greatly decreasing the number of males in the small Muslim community of Medina. Besides the widows of the Muslims killed in these battles, there was a large number of orphans whose interests had to be considered, and also many female prisoners of war. Protection of the lone women and the orphans called for some strong measure; and polygamy, with the condition laid down

in the above quotation, proved the remedy. The Muslims were thus first commanded to take particular care of the orphans, but if they could not do full justice to them otherwise, they were told that they might marry the widows, whose children would thus become their own children; and as the number of women, owing to the war, was much greater than the number of men, they were allowed to have more wives. Polygamy was thus sanctioned under the peculiar circumstances at that time existing in the Muslim society. The action of the Prophet in marrying only widows and the example of his companions bears out this theory. Polygamy, as sanctioned by the Prophet, is not an evil, though the practice of some of his unworthy followers, who gained much wealth in after-time, degraded it.

In this connection the following verses are also noteworthy :—

“You will never be able to treat equally all your wives, even though you ardently desire to do so. Restrain yourself, however, from altogether following the bent (of favouritism) and leaving one of them as it were in abeyance; but if you are generous, and if you fear God, He is indulgent and merciful.”¹

“Let them never be afflicted; let all be satisfied with what thou givest them. God knows what is in your hearts. He is wise and good.”²

Also the Muslim is obliged to provide a separate establishment for each wife if she or the first wife demands it.

It is clear, I think, from the above that the law of Muhammad in this respect was inspired by great benevolence towards women. Indeed, by opponents of his own day he was thought to be absurdly partial in the favour which he showed to women; and this partiality, which was in truth simple justice, and aimed at a much-needed reform, was made the ground of calumnies which still persist among non-Muslims to-day. He was not the rank voluptuary that Christendom for long depicted him. He spent his prime of manhood—twenty-four years—with one wife only, Khadijah, to whom

¹ Qur-án, Sûrah iv., “En-nisâ.”

² Qur-án, Sûrah xxxiii., “El-Ahzâb.” This command is addressed to the Prophet, whose privilege was to have more wives than was permitted to his followers. As the head of the State he used this privilege to cement alliances with divers tribes, and so advance the cause he served.

he was devotedly attached, though she was a great deal older than he.¹ With one or two exceptions his numerous later marriages were acts of charity or policy; and both as husband and father he was an example to the faithful. Had the excesses to which some of his followers became addicted at a later period happened in his day, there is no doubt whatever but that he would have condemned and punished them.

It is more difficult to divine the origin of another false idea still popular in Christendom—that Muslims hold that women have no souls. There is no hint of such a doctrine in the Qur-án or the Sunnah or in any Muslim author that I know. The Qur-án expressly says: "Men or women, those who do good works and are believers, shall enter into Paradise and shall not be frustrated of one tittle of reward."² And the Prophet's declaration that his beloved daughter Fâtimah on her wedding-day was attended by multitudes of angels on her right hand and on her left does not suggest that he considered women soulless, nor does his reported vision with regard to Khadíjah.³

He said that many men in the history of the world had attained moral perfection, but of women only four: Asia, the wife of Pharaoh; Mary, the mother of Jesus; Khadíjah, and Fâtimah. The fact that he believed that women could attain

¹ The Apostle of God (God bless and save him!) loved her (Khadíjah) with a firm affection. He used to travel on her business to the city of Busrah with her slave Meysarah, before his union with her. After he married her he spent her money in the way of God; and he never ceased remembering her kindly after her demise till jealousy possessed Ayesha—"a young girl, daughter of his best friend Abu Bekr, whom the Prophet married on the death of Khadíjah"—and she said: "O Apostle of God, what was she but an old hag? God has given thee a better in her place." He answered: "No, by Allah! God has not given me a better in her stead. She believed in me when the world derided me. She freely gave to me her wealth to use when men opposed me. So kind and generous was she to me." Ayesha said: "I will never mention her henceforth without respect."—Ahmed ibn Yûsuf, sect. i., chap. 40.

² Qur-án, Sûrah iy., "En-nisâ."

³ "Abu Hureyrah relates: Gabriel came to the Prophet (God bless and save him) and said: This Khadíjah presented to thee as it were a vase of plenty: greet her in my Lord's name and mine, and tell her that a mansion of silver is prepared for her in that Garden where toil and trouble are not.

"She died at Mecca at the age of sixty-four years and some months, and was buried in El-Mu'allâ."—Ahmed ibn Yûsuf, sect. i., chap. 40, cf. Abu'l-Feda, El Bokhari, and other commentators.

it sufficiently disproves the charge that he esteemed them soulless. Besides, we read in the Qur-án: "Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the almsgiving men and the almsgiving women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and chaste men and chaste women, and the men who remember God much and the women who remember—God has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward."—El-Ahzâb.

The true Islamic spirit with regard to women is a spirit of justice within the existing social order. The Western spirit is one of chivalrous devotion and half-mystic exaltation which is apt to make its votaries unconscious of the claims of common justice. In England until very lately married women had no rights of property; in all Islamic lands they had enjoyed full rights of property since the time of the Prophet. A still more curious example of this difference is in my memory. In March 1914 I was dining at an hotel in London with a Turkish gentleman. Of the company was an English Member of Parliament, who, after dinner, began, as was the fashion at that time, to rail against the Suffragettes. These had been roughly handled by a mob, and the Member of Parliament declared that they deserved such treatment. Holding the common but erroneous view about Muhammadans, he thought that our host, as a Turk, was certain to agree with him. The Muslim, I could see, was greatly shocked. He said, "My friend, you cannot think what you say. It is a bad thing for me to be beaten by a woman, but it is a far worse thing for me to beat a woman. Your Government is both wicked and foolish to allow such cruelty." "But what else would you have us do?" was the amazed reply. "Give them what they ask! It is but justice. If, in your state of society, you allow them to take the place of men, you must give them the rights of men."

Strange as it may seem to holders of the popular belief about Islam, the Prophet would undoubtedly have said the same.

III

FATALISM.

Perfect resignation to the Divine Will is the aim of every Muslim. But it would be a mistake to imagine that this resignation, if ever it could be fully attained, would imply the lack of all energy and initiative in mundane things. For the Will of God as expressed in the Qur-án and inculcated by the Sunnah is, that men should strive to the utmost in a worldly sense on behalf of that which is good and in opposition to that which is evil or nefarious; that they should not retire from the world, but take a part in its concerns, and should be conscientious, never lazy, in the transaction of their business or performance of their daily work. They are not, however, to suppose that, by so doing, they serve God in the sense of helping Him, "He who strives, strives for the good of his own soul, for God has no need of His creatures."

Of all such striving as is comprehended in the term "Jehâd" (Holy Warfare) the strife for good against evil, which includes the conquest of a man's own lusts,¹ the Prophet says, "This life is but a tillage for the next; do good that you may reap there; for effort is ordained of God."

Concerning the daily business of a man, he said, "He who does not work either for himself or for others will not receive God's reward."

"O God, preserve me from incapacity and laziness."

"God is gracious to him who earns his living by his own labour and not by cadging."

"To remove obstacles from the path is charity."

This saying might with reason and advantage be proclaimed in every Arab village.

"Pay the labourer his wage before his sweat dries up."

"Trust in God but tie your camel."

"A Muslim who mixes with men and puts up with their inconveniences is better than one who holds aloof, living a life of seclusion and contemplation."

"Wealth properly employed (i.e. for the welfare of mankind) is a blessing; and an individual may lawfully endeavour to increase it by honest means (i.e. not by means of usury or any kind of oppression)."

"Whoever desires the world and its riches in a lawful

¹ "The greatest of Jehâd is that for the conquest of self."—"Sayings of Muhammad."

manner, in order to preserve himself from beggary, and (to gain) a living for his family, and to show kindness to his neighbour, will come to God with his face bright as the moon of the fourteenth night."

"Islam does not allow asceticism."

"Charity is a duty for every Muslim. He who has not the means for it, let him do a good act or abstain from a bad one: that is his charity."

"He who believes in one God and in a life hereafter, let him not injure his neighbours."

"Verily Allah loves a Muslim who is poor with a family and withholds himself from the unlawful and from begging."

"A tax should be taken from the rich and distributed among the poor."

"That individual is not a proper Muslim who eats his fill and leaves his neighbour hungry."¹

From these quotations it will be seen that the desire of wealth for its own sake or for purely selfish objects, which prevails in Christendom to-day, is abhorrent to the spirit of Islam, which is a spirit not of competition but of brotherhood. And this desire of the Muslims to live and let live impresses the money-making European as a fault of character, a something lacking, a screw loose. In so far as it is based on principle it rather evidences strength of character, the something lacking is in those who lightly scorn it.

It must be remembered, also, that for at least two centuries the energy of Muhammadans, at any rate in countries under Muslim rule, has been applied to war; not through their own fault, but owing to the attacks made on them by the Christian Powers. They have had scant leisure to devote to commerce or the works of peace; whereas their Christian subjects, exempt from military service, have been able to devote themselves continuously to the peaceful art of self-advancement. Of old, before the present capitalistic commercial system rose in Europe, and when the Muslim Empire was too strong to be assailed, the commerce of Islam was at least equal to that of Christendom. It was organized, as was European commerce in those days, in the co-operative form of guilds of merchants and of craftsmen in the different cities; and something of that organization still remains, enough to form a firm foundation for a greater structure. But it lacks the spirit of competition

¹ "Sayings of Muhammad."

and shrinks from the cut-throat commerce of the Europeans. The apathy of the Muslim merchants towards our present-day commercial and industrial enterprise, their attachment to conditions which seem to Europeans antiquated and unprofitable, is striking. And if accused of lack of energy they will reply "kismet" or "kadar" or "maktûb," according to their nationality. They thus convict themselves of hopeless fatalism in the judgment of the Western critic, who knows no other standard than self-interest. The fact is that none of them experience the Christian's longing for a self-advancement which, for its attainment, demands the whole time of the individual, depriving him of leisure for reflection, conversation, and religious exercises. They think such occupation futile, even impious—a game not worth the candle.

But transport the whole industrial question from the sphere of a man's private business into the realm of *Jehâd*; let it once be known of all the millions of Islam that European commerce wages war for the enslavement of the East and the overthrow of all its standards of religion, honour, and morality, and the apathy, which we have noticed, would soon fall away. Commerce and industry would become sacred fields of effort, and those millions could be organized as a great army of workers upon a pan-Islamic—nay, even perhaps upon a pan-Oriental—basis, since alliances are of the essence of *Jehâd*. Proposals with a tendency in this direction have already been made to my knowledge; and it is significant that those proposals came from Muslims living under Christian rule who have had the opportunity of estimating the true character of the assaults of Christian Europe on Islam, which Muslims in an independent state had not yet realized, inclining to ascribe the onslaughts to religious fanaticism. If, and when, the Muslim Empire is annihilated, the zeal and energy of *El Islam* will seek fresh outlets in the nature of *Jehâd*; and commercial war with the boycott of all Christian houses, may be one of them. The movement could be quickly organized; a great Oriental Power would almost certainly support it; and the cost of labour and of certain raw materials in Muslim countries is considerably lower than it is with us. The Muslim lacks neither energy nor forethought in a struggle which he deems worth while from an Islamic standpoint. Mere selfish strife for gain does not appeal to him as worthy of sustained endeavour. It is, indeed, unlawful in the brotherhood of *El Islam*.

IV

THE COMMAND TO KILL.

Chief among the grievances cherished by the Christian moralist against Islam is the apparent stern indifference of the latter faith to bloodshed in the cause of right. War is recognized by the Qur-án as a fact of human life, and rules are laid down for its conduct by believers. There is also a definite command to kill those tribes or individuals who persecute the Muslims or strive to work sedition in the body of Islam.

"Why should you not fight in God's way, and for the weak among men, women and children, who say: O Lord, bring us forth from this city whose inhabitants are oppressors. Give us a champion from (among those who stand in) Thy presence, and give us from Thy presence a defender."

"A warrant is given to those who, because they have suffered wrong, have recourse to arms; and truly God is powerful to help them."

"And if God had not repelled some men by others"—(this is an argument against the pacifists)—"cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated, would certainly have been destroyed."

"God will surely help him who helps the cause of God; for God is just, strong, and mighty."

"But in this law of retaliation is your security for life, O men of understanding, so that you may fear God."

"Fight for the cause of God against those who fight against you; but commit not the injustice of attacking them. God loves not the aggressors."

"And kill them wherever you shall find them, and eject them from the place from which they have ejected you, for *sedition is worse than killing*; yet attack them not at the sacred mosque (the Haram of Mecca) unless they attack you therein; but if they attack, kill them; such are the deserts of graceless people. But if they desist, then truly God is gracious and merciful."

"Fight, therefore, against them till there be no more sedition and oppression, and (till) sincerity in religion be established; but if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against the wicked."

(To be continued.)

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